

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Rep. David Price (NC-04) this morning addressed a ribbon cutting ceremony for an expanded distribution facility at the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina. He was joined by Raleigh Mayor Charles Meeker and local advocates for the hungry as they sought to draw attention to the growing needs of the Raleigh distribution facility, which serves the needs of families in 34 North Carolina counties. The following are Price's remarks as prepared.

I am proud to celebrate these new dock doors with you. I don't believe I've ever participated in such an expansive ribbon cutting.

But it frustrates and challenges me to be here, too. I did not have to think about whether there was something in the kitchen this morning that would make a good breakfast. When I return home tonight, I won't have to think about where our dinner is coming from either. I believe that most of us here are in that lucky place.

But many are not so fortunate. One in eight North Carolinians receives help as North Carolina's Second Harvest Food Banks provide food assistance to over one million different people each year.

And those numbers spike in unique emergency times: hurricanes that disrupt lives and destroy homes and other natural and man-made emergencies that take away a family's safety net.

Many of those seeking food assistance have not been able to find their way out of poverty because of this economic recovery that has failed to significantly boost wages. We have a federal minimum wage that has been stagnant for nine years. At least the NC General Assembly has improved it at the state level. People have had to choose between food on the table and paying for utility bills, prescriptions and medical care, gas, or their mortgage. Many are working but cannot make ends meet. Consider this: a third of the households served [by NC Food Banks] include at least one employed adult.

Many served by the Food Bank are hungry children. The richest country in the world has children who are starving. How can this be? There are a host of answers to this question, and

government, business leaders, and non-profits must continue to work together to resolve them. I know one thing: to address our fiscal meltdown at the federal level by targeting Medicaid and food stamps is an outrage.

Still, while hunger remains, these dock doors are a great way to better address the Food Bank's demands. They allow more trucks to back up here, load the food, and head out to the families served by the Food Bank in 34 counties. They build in efficiencies not available before. They really are a reason for celebration.

Thank you to the donors who have made this possible. I see that White Memorial Presbyterian Church is well represented and I am glad to see Ed Carney from Cisco Systems. Special thanks to Jack and Mary Hoffler who helped fund this building. I know there have been other corporate sponsors, too. Our religious congregations are a great resource, and we are lucky to have business leaders across the state who are committed to giving back to our communities in such important ways.

Lastly, I want to thank you for including me today. We sometimes get caught up in the minutia of running a government in Washington and occasionally lose sight of the good that is happening in America as citizens help one another. I appreciate the Food Bank's professional and volunteer efforts to reduce hunger among our neighbors.

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